

"What is the use of all this work for medical organization?" Dear man, the uses are so many that one might write books about them. There is, first of all, the **WHAT WE WORK FOR.** duty which you owe yourself and your patients. You have assumed, with the taking upon yourself of professional rank, certain obligations, not the least of which is to give to your patients the best of up-to-date medical knowledge. Can you possibly do this if you are out of touch with what is doing and progressing in medical science? Can you keep in touch with medical progress if you shut yourself up like a clam and pay no attention to what other men are doing and reporting? You are the worst kind of an utter fool if you think you can, and you have no right to be turned loose upon an unsuspecting and confiding public. No man, of himself and alone, can possibly keep up with what is being done, no matter how many journals he takes and tries to read, unless he comes in contact with other men and hears of their successes, mistakes and experiences. Furthermore, you should give of your own store of experience. Wherein you succeed may be just the little particular which the other fellow misses and so does not help his patient as much as he could if he had the knowledge of that one little thing which is yours alone. That is nothing more nor less than your duty. And again, you know that your professional life is a very lonely one. You see only sick people and they all think you are about the smartest there is, or they wouldn't have you. And pretty soon you get the same magnificent idea, and then you look down upon the others of your calling whom you do not meet and know, and you think you are a little bit better than they are. But, really you know, you are not. Go to your county society, help make it what it should be, give of what you have and take from what others give, and you will soon learn to lose some of this enforced self-conceit. You are not the whole thing, as your patients would make you believe, and possibly the man you particularly look down upon may do something a whole lot better than you ever thought of doing it. And more than this, your profession exists to protect the public, often in spite of themselves and their ignorance. Are you doing your duty here? Can you do it unless you help to make your county society the power in the county which is the right and the duty of our profession?

How are the people to be protected from the quack, the faker and the charlatan, unless you, who know the exact conditions, step out manfully and shoulder your **CONSIDER THE QUACK.** duty? The people do not know what you do of the pretender to false knowledge, and they can not know unless our profession tells them. How can the legislature, made up of ordinary laymen, enact proper laws for the protection of the people when they do not know or realize what the people are to be protected from, or why? And who is to give them this infor-

mation if we do not? Comes the Governor of the state to our society and asks that members of it be elected to the legislature so that he may have a source of reliable advice and information. He realizes his own limitations and his own ignorance and asks that we help him. How much more ignorant must be the general average of the lay citizen? Is your county society—and are you—doing what should be done in this direction? If not, get busy; do it now; do it right away. See that your society takes up the question of quackery with the citizens of your county. Get the ministry interested and show them what a lot of harm they are doing in allowing their flocks to be preyed upon by the Viavi fakers and the other brands too numerous to mention. Show the lawyers and the judges of your county what the medical law really is; what it means; what it strives to do and how it is intended to protect, not you or your profession, but the ignorant sick man. Have you done this? Have you ever tried to do it? If not, there is another duty you have neglected. And it should be done by your county society. That is another of the numerous reasons for organization. Through a solid, friendly, studious, hard working county society, these things can be so presented to all classes of the people that they will demand the legislation for their protection which they now look upon with suspicion—for they do not understand—whenever we recommend it to the uninstructed legislators. To be sure, our profession is benefited incidentally by the suppression of the quack, for he brings constant disgrace upon us all through his methods and his pretensions. Hundreds of letters come to the JOURNAL every year, protesting against the presence of some quack in some community where the pretender is throwing open ridicule upon the upright members of our profession. The people do not understand and they are an easy prey. But once let them understand, once get the leaders of the churches, the women and the women's clubs interested, once let them see what the real facts are, and the day of the quack will be speedily over.

Consider the terrible ignorance of the people on the subject of preventable diseases. It is appalling.

In these United States a single preventable disease kills more people every day than were killed in the Spanish-American war! And mind you, a *preventable disease*, for tuberculosis is perfectly preventable. Over 400 persons die each day from a disease that could be prevented, wiped out, if the people knew and understood. Is it any part or portion of our duty to make them understand? Is it not a part of your duty to see to it that they are educated as to the nature of tuberculosis and the means at hand for preventing its spread? We have recently seen the organization of the California Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. The work of this Association will be very largely directed toward the education of the public. Is it not also a part of the duty of the county medical society to co-operate in this

magnificent undertaking by holding meetings with the laity and explaining carefully, clearly and fully what it all means? And how can such work be done without the county society? How can it be done without medical organization, strong, friendly, earnest co-operation amongst medical men through the medium of their county society? How many ordinary voting citizens realize that when they get typhoid fever it is because they have taken into themselves, through the mouth, something from the feces or the urine of some other person, one who had the disease? And typhoid fever is, as we know, a preventable disease. Yet the people do not know it, and they continue to allow themselves to become infected with this filthy disease, to allow their water supplies to become infected, to allow dirty dairies to deliver typhoid-infected milk at the door, simply because they have not been informed of these things by those who should inform them—our medical societies. It is a disgrace to you and me; a disgrace to every member of the medical profession the world over, that such things continue to be. And it is because we have not fulfilled our duty to each other and to our charge. The result can be secured only through organization. Only through the active co-operation of all physicians. It can never be secured while we devote any portion of our time to belittling or slandering our brother physicians and by keeping away from county society work.

The potential power of our profession is enormous; our power for good is almost unlimited, if we will but use it. Let us but

**OUR REAL INFLUENCE.** take that interest in politics—"the science and art of government"—which we really owe to

the body politic as citizens as well as members of a learned profession, and politics will be improved thereby. But let us not allow politics to touch and smirch medicine. We, by bringing our special and particular knowledge of things sanitary into the lawmaking body, can do great good to the people and for the people. They need it; they are coming to the point when they will demand it. Shall we wait for that demand or shall we drop the mantle of secrecy which has robed us, to our detriment, and begin right now to educate the people and to tell them what they should know and assist them in sending to the legislature men of a stamp that will carry out the wishes of an enlightened people? The science and art of government should be aided as much by the members of our profession, whose study and work is the physical welfare of the citizen, as by the legal profession whose work is the guarding of the material welfare of the rights and property of the citizen. Is not this a proper duty of an organized medical profession, and is it not therefore a strong reason for better, firmer, more active organization? Is not the responsibility for shirking it to be placed directly upon us? Disaster will result if the attempt at any time should prove successful and our Board of Medical Examiners should be dragged

within smirching distance of the political machine. How could such a disaster occur if the people realized the protection to themselves that an upright, honest and conscientious administration of that medical law, with no shadow of political influence distorting its operations, extended? Is not there here some added reason for medical organization? The article on a practical examination in anatomy, appearing in this issue, shows most conclusively the need for such an examining board. Anatomy is the very foundation-stone of all systems of treating the sick. Would you want a sick cur to be treated by one whose knowledge of anatomy was such as to permit him to think the heart larger than the liver and the two transposed within the body? Those ignorant ones who are rejected, of course make a howl, and they attract the sympathy of many laymen who know nothing of the actual facts. But if you are doing your full duty, and your society is doing its full duty, it will be but a short time until every layman knows the facts and is a staunch supporter of a law that protects him from such deplorable ignorance. Then the sore-head may howl as much as he pleases. Is this not a part of our work and a reason for the existence of medical organization?

Nor are we without benefit ourselves, material and financial benefit from all this work. We have had practical demonstration of what

**OUR OWN BENEFIT.** organized effort will do in the matter of fees for insurance examinations.

We shall, when we have a solid and thoroughly organized profession, devoting no small portion of its time to showing the people what they should know, see another and greater victory. Decent fees are essential to comfortable living and scientific upkeep. A poorly supported doctor is a dangerous doctor, for he lapses ignorant, no matter how well informed he may have been when he started in. If he has not the income to buy books and subscribe to journals, to attend county and state and national medical society meetings, to travel occasionally and see what others are doing and achieving, he can not give to his patients assistance as good as it ought to be—the patients suffer for their own niggardliness. Let them understand this, and they are cheerful in the payment of their bills. Let them clearly see that they really suffer from the "ten cents a visit" sort of treatment—from the lodge curse—from the "dollar a month" contract doctor, and these evils will disappear. When a man is sick he wants to know that he is getting the best consideration of his case and that he will get the best up-to-date treatment. If he once understands that on the "ten cents a visit" sort of bargain-day treatment he gets mighty little consideration and the easiest sort of treatment that can be doled out, then he will get on to himself and depart from that which does him little good—or does him good and plenty, whichever way you choose to look at it. Then, too, think of the tremendous value of a strong medical organization protecting its members from blackmail in the